

Menu



- [Performances for Adults](#)
- [Schools](#)
- [Children's & Family Concerts](#)

- [row](#)
 - [About](#)
 - [Calendar](#)
 - [Booking Info](#)
 - [Free Resources](#)
 - [Advice Blog](#)

- [row](#)
 - [Schools – Visits](#)
 - [Schools – Online Concerts](#)
 - [Video on Demand](#)

- [row](#)
 - [Performances for Adults](#)
 - [Children's & Family Concerts](#)
 - [Store](#)

Advice for Performing Artists

Welcome to the “Educate and Entertain” Blog!

Below you'll find a growing series of articles, tips, encouragements, and how-to's for musicians and other performing artists who work *regionally* (in any region) and would like to be making a great living doing it.

(If you're interested in becoming a household name, national touring, getting lots of radio play, selling downloads, etc, I'm sorry to say that I don't have much to offer you...)

For the past 25 years, I've been supporting myself and my family of four as a regional performer and teaching artist.



I work any place I can drive to (and usually back from) in a day, and primarily in *non-traditional*, “*under the radar*” venues such as:

- schools
- libraries
- museums
- historical societies
- regional concert series
- performing arts venues
- cultural centers
- public and civic events

If this kind of performing interests you, that’s good news, because whether you’re a storyteller, dancer, spoken word artist, professional speaker, actor/actress, musician, mime, or any number of other things (*what am I leaving out?*), **you can build a really great career** around these types of gigs.

A Great Living in the Arts: My Story

In 1994, I suffered [a difficult repetitive motion injury](#) that took me out of the world of being a working musician.

It was the **best** thing that ever happened to my music career.

(And no, that wasn’t a typo!)

It’s true.

Losing the ability to play three- and four-hour gigs in bars is what launched me into the world of [educational performances](#), where concerts are generally shorter (40-60 minutes), listening audiences (adults, kids, or both) eat up the shows, venues secure funding to make them happen(!), working hours are earlier in the day, and the living is...well, not easy, because it takes a lot of work to keep it all going...but really good.

I made the shift out of necessity, plain and simple. Shorter gigs with a bit more dialogue between songs were just what I needed to give my arm a rest.



Demonstrating the bones. Photo by Greg Meadows

What I didn't realize, but has become really clear to me since, is that **by adding some education and/or enlightenment to your performances, you can literally write your own ticket**, setting your own rates and doing really satisfying work around your own areas of interest.

Hence, the title of this blog – **Educate and Entertain: A Great Living in the Arts**

(And if I can do it, you can too!)

Business and Marketing for Musicians and Performers

I don't know why, but the business end of keeping my family fed has always come pretty naturally to me, and I know it's something that many super-talented performer friends and colleagues struggle with.

For so many artists (and others), **the marketing end is the yucky stuff**.



Maybe for me it was my upbringing as the son of a banker, or my Business and Psychology training in college, or my six years in the marketing field before breaking off as a full-time musician in 1992.

Or more likely, it's just my fear of failing miserably that's kept me so motivated to make this work.

Whatever it is, I've had a lot of fun trying to keep my calendar filled with rewarding gigs, and I'm happy to share what I've learned.

And, I'd love for this to be a two-way conversation. We all have so much we can learn from each other.

Starting Where You're At



A lot of this advice assumes that you have a really great “product” already, and you just need some new opportunities. If that's the case, I hope you'll find some great new strategies and food for thought here.

Some articles will be for those who would like to move into new areas of work where perhaps you don't yet have the experience you'll need, but you're willing to put the time in.

New Articles Every Monday

I'll be posting a new article to the blog every Monday, so check back here often.

Better yet, [just click here](#) and **you'll get these posts right in your inbox as they come out.**

Alright, it's time to dive in.

Let's go...

Advice for Performing Artists

- **TOPICS:**
- [Show All](#)
- [Business Advice](#)
- [Getting Gigs](#)
- [Grants](#)
- [Marketing](#)
- [Performing](#)
- [Pricing](#)
- [School Gigs](#)
- [Social Media](#)
- [Tools](#)
- [Website Tips](#)
- [Working with Kids](#)

•

•



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)

[Do You Work Too Cheap?](#)

[Marketing 101 for Performers](#)

[What Do You Do When You're NOT Performing?](#)

[There are lots of reasons to do low paying gigs, and I'd encourage you to share this asset in marketing your performance with more gigs. The things we do OFF the road can make all the difference.](#)

[Read More](#)

• [Read More](#)

•

d1



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)

[The Regional Performer: How Far Will You Go?](#)

[Artist Website Fix #1: Social Proof](#)

[Carnegie Hall? Royal Albert Hall? The Kalamazoo Chorus? marketing power of social proof on your website will blow your mind](#) [How To Perform for 25,000 Kids \(from your basement\)](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)

[All about performing for the masses, at home, in your pajama bottoms.](#)

[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)

[Social Media ≠ Great Promotion](#)

[12 Quick Marketing Tips for Performing Artists](#)

[Website Fix #2: Using Analytics](#)

[Taken a look at the reach and engagement you're getting on social media? Here are 12 quick tips for dipping your marketing game and getting more gigs.](#) [How often do people find you on Google? Which social media channels work? Find out](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)

[How to Get Gigs: Questions from Performers](#) [How Much Should I Charge? 3 Pricing Strategies](#) [No Reply? Why Don't Venues Get Back to Me?](#)

[Great marketing questions from subscribers, along with how much should you charge for a gig? Here are 3 ways to reply when you reach out to venues for a booking?](#)

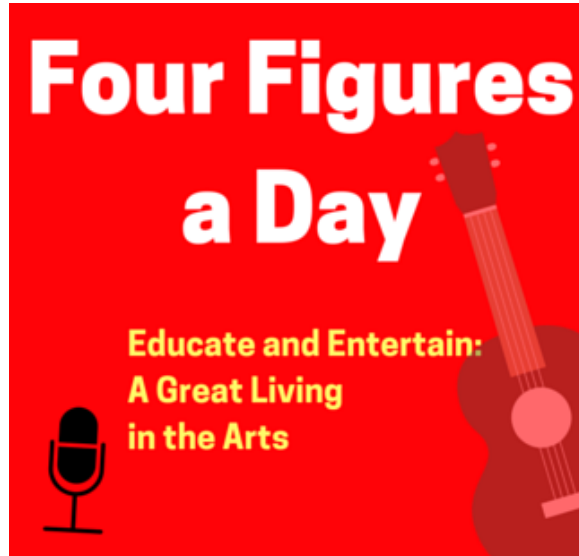
[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)

[What Arts Councils Do For Performing Artists](#) [Four Figures a Day: The Life of an Educational Performer](#) [Is This All You Do?](#)

[Here's how \(and why\) you should connect with your arts council to make money as a performer, you need to BE seen and that's the question. How do you respond?](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)

[Two Steps to More Gigs](#)

[Take these two steps and you're guaranteed to get more gigs.](#)

[Read More](#)

[Facebook Ads: 6 Wins for Performing Artists](#)

[Six things you can do with a Facebook ad \(and why you should try it\).](#)

[Read More](#)

[12 More Marketing Tips for Performing Artists](#)

[12 marketing tips for upping your marketing game and getting more gigs.](#)

[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)

[Songwriting in Schools: The Teachers Need You](#) [Songwriting in Schools \(part II\): Make Money from Your Music](#) [Questions From a Subscriber: Gigs and Stereotypes](#)

[Do you write songs? Like kids? Here's a whole new income stream, how to charge & how to get the gigs + expert tips on avoiding stereotypes about your artform through some creative "packaging."](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)

[Live Performance Contracts](#)

[When to use a contract, and what it should include.](#)

[Read More](#)

[Themed Shows Get Booked!](#)

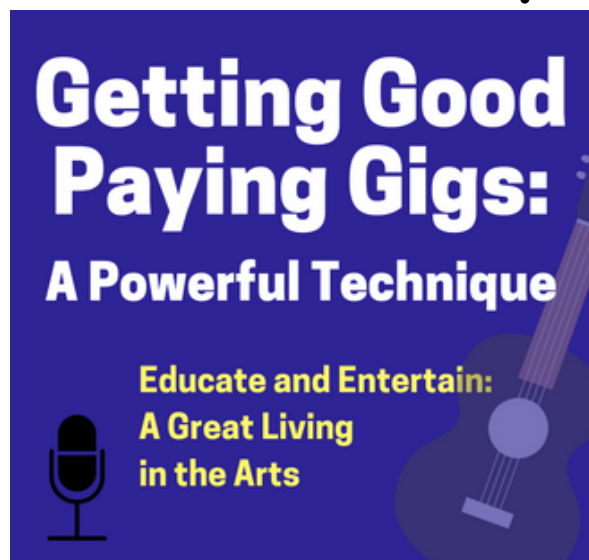
[For those looking to expand opportunities and income - this is big.](#)

[Read More](#)

[How NOT To Get Bookings: The Performing Artist's Guide](#)

[If you don't want bookings, do these 13 things!](#)

[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)

[Getting Good Paying Gigs: A Powerful Technique Right Under Your Nose: A New Gig Opportunity. Do You Want to be Cheap or Extraordinary?](#)

[Here's a tried-and-true tactic I've been using for years. This opportunity for lots of new work is right under your nose. So make an easy choice - which way do you slant?](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)

[5 Reasons to Send a Thank You Letter After the Gig?](#) [Website Best Practices: For Musicians and Performing Artists](#) [Performing Online A New Income Stream \(or Two\)](#)

[Do you send a thank you note after the gig? Here's why it's important.](#) [Artist website mistakes and how to avoid them.](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)

[Live streamed performances from home - two ways to skin it.](#)

[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)

[12 Business Boosters for Musicians and Artists](#) [7 Things I Wish I Knew When I Became a Full-Time Musician](#) [The Social Media Jungle: How To Get Untangled](#)

[Short and sweet business-boosting tips.](#)

[Read More](#)

[Hard lessons I've learned as a full-time artist.](#)

[Read More](#)

[Here's how to do what's effective and leave the rest behind.](#)

[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)

[Grants for Musicians & Performers: Two Powerful Keys to Successful Grant Writing](#)

[Here are two critical keys to successful grant writing.](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)

[A simple new habit to create more gig bookings.](#)

[Read More](#)

[It's prime real estate - are you missing an easy opportunity to market yourself?](#)

[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)

[The Email Junkyard: Why Your Booking Emails Fail](#) [Content Marketing for Musicians and Performers](#) [How to Engage an Audience at a Concert](#)

[8 key reasons your booking emails go unanswered.](#)

[It's how I got called to appear in a PBS special!](#)

[12 powerful tips for putting on a great show.](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)

[Live Sound Considerations: Mics, PAs, Mixers, and More](#)

[Getting the Gig \(Try This!\)](#)

[Solid and simple advice for getting a great sound out of live performance.](#) • [Efficient tips for staying organized and booking gigs.](#) • [Try this!](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)

[A Day in the Life of a School Performer](#)

[The Entrepreneurial Artist: 12 Quick \(and Hard-Won\) Tips for Success](#)

[Here's how a typical day of school shows goes.](#)

[12 quick \(and hard-won\) tips for entrepreneurial success as an artist.](#)

[How to get unstuck fast. It's simple.](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)

[Negotiating on Price: For Musicians and Artists](#) [7 Ways to Sell More “Merch” At Your Gigs](#) [Booking Gigs: The Power of Specialization](#)

[When they can't pay what you need to make.](#)

[Selling more of your CDs and other items at live gigs](#) [Are you a "Jack" or a "specialist?" Often, the Jack wins.](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)

[More Engagement on Facebook \(Right Now\)](#) [Do This Right Now \(#1\)](#)

[Here's what's working really well on Facebook right now.](#) The first in a series of short, actionable tips to improve your marketing.

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)

[Do This Right Now \(#2\)](#)

[This marketing change is like finding money from time to time.](#)

[Read More](#)

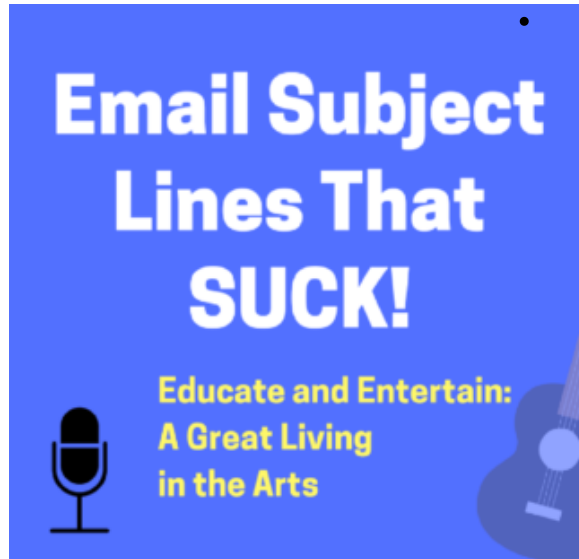


[Read More](#)

[Do This Right Now \(#3\)](#)

[Another quick win for better marketing today.](#)

[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)

[Email Subject Lines That SUCK!](#)

[And how to write one that actually gets opened.](#)

[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)

[Sponsorships and Endorsements: A Beginner's Guide](#)

[A guest post from Adam Meachem.](#)

[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)

[School Gig Opportunity: Do You Know About This?](#)

[CILC gets over 7,000 booking requests a year!](#)

[Read More](#)

[Do This Right Now \(#4\)](#)

[Charging enough for gigs? Try this calculator.](#)

[Read More](#)

[12 Tips That Will Make You More Money as a Musician \(or Storyteller, or\)](#)

[12 quick tips for entrepreneurial success as an artist.](#)

[Read More](#)


[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)

[5 Podcasts You Might Want to Check Out](#) [How to Promote Yourself as a Musician or Performer](#) [Recent Subscriber Questions \(vol. II\)](#)

[Turn dead time into growth time with these marketing podcasts to five subscribers' questions.](#)

[Answers to five more subscriber questions.](#)

[Read More](#)
[Read More](#)
[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)

[More Subscriber Questions \(vol. III\)](#)

[Write a Killer Artist Bio \(short, medium, and long versions\)](#) [People Not Taking Action? Try This.](#)

[Answers to five more subscriber questions.](#)

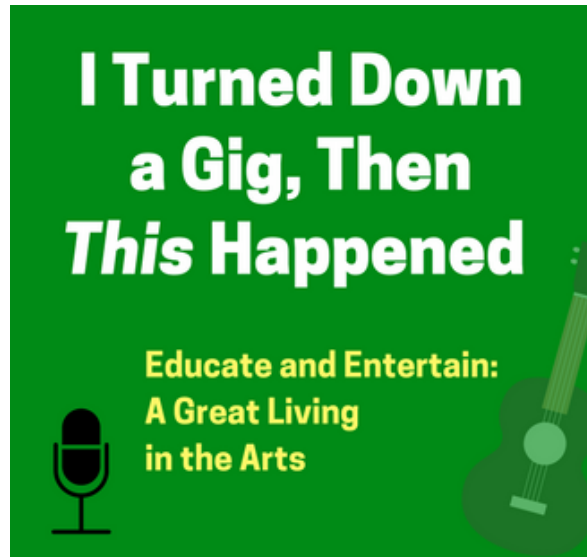
[Short, medium and long ones.](#)

[When you've sent the gig quote, and then it's crickets...try this.](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)

[I Turned Down A Gig, Then This Happened](#)[Performing for Seniors: The Essential Guide](#)[When Others Will Play For Free](#)

[Sometimes it works out in your favor to say "no thank you's and bolts" guide to working with senior audiences](#)[This is how we exit the "race to the bottom."](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)

[Live Sound Part II: EQing For Success](#)

[We're all using our EQ sliders wrong!](#)

[Read More](#)

[5 Ways Artists can use Google Alerts](#)

[Here are five of my favorite ways to use this great free tool from Google, great hours, and guaranteed income. Here's how to do it.](#)

[Read More](#)

[How To Get Gigs in Libraries](#)

[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)



[Read More](#)

[How to Get Gigs in Schools](#)

[Want Better Gigs? It's Not About You](#)

[Performing Artists: What's in Your Inbox?](#)

[The A-B-C's of getting as much work as you want in K-12 schools](#) - [Here's an important key to getting the kinds of work you want](#) - [We want email bringing news of gigs, grants, and showcases - or just ads for](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)[Read More](#)

[Educate Your Audience and Write Your Ticket](#) [26 Professional Development Resources for Performing Artists](#)

[Making this one shift has allowed me to write my own ticket.](#) [Need help with your career? Here are some great resources.](#)

[Read More](#)[Read More](#)

Get Dave's News, Discounts, and More

[Join Dave's Mailing List](#)

Close

Your Contact Information

*Required Fields

I'm interested in the following (check all that apply)*

- ☐ Possibly booking Dave for an in-person visit at some point ☐ Possibly booking an online concert or distance learning program at some point
☐ Subscribing to Blog for Performers ☐ Finding out about future performances for adults in my area
☐ Finding out about future performances for kids/families in my area

Captcha

L X Z 6

A CAPTCHA is a program that protects websites against SPAM by generating tests that humans can pass but malicious computer programs cannot.

[Join Mailing List >](#)



© 2018 Dave Ruch | [Privacy Policy](#) | Site Design by [Renoun Creative](#)

155 St. James Place | Buffalo, NY 14222

- [Media and Press Kits](#)

Quick Contact

Have questions or looking for booking information? Call Dave at 716-884-6855, or send him a message below.

Message

*Required